Operationalisation of ZOWKHATARIRHI customs gate

2323. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that apart from Moreh (Manipur) there is another customs gate namely 'ZOWKHATARIRHI' on the Indo-Myanmar Border;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the said gate is not operational for border trade; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to make the said gate operational and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes. Apart from Moreh Land Customs Station in Manipur, there is another Land Customs Station (not customs gate) named Zokhawthar Land Customs Station in Mizoram on the Indo-Myanmar border.

(b) and (c) The Land Customs Station at Zokhawthar was inaugurated on 30th January 2004. However, till date there has been no export/import through this trading point as the Indo-Myanmar Trade Agreement limits barter trade between the two nations to agricultural and minor forest produces only and Zokhawthar is not a declared entry point for import of Plants and Plant products as per Schedule I, II and III of the Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Order, 2003 of the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India effective from 1st January, 2004.

Steps to provide remunerative price to silk producers

2324. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of widespread discontentment and disappointment amongst country's silk producers as they are unable to get appropriate price to their produce due to large scale imports, both legal and illegal of silk from countries like China and Thailand; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to ensure remunerative prices to the producers of silk in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA). (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of India have taken several initiatives to safeguard the interest of domestic silk industry and to improve the quality and productivity of silk production thereby ensuring remunerative price to the producers of silk in the country. These initiatives include the following:

(i) Antidumping duty has been imposed by Govt. of India with effect from 2nd January, 2003 on all imported mulberry raw silk (not thrown) of international grade 2A and below, originated in or exported from People's Republic of China, so as to keep the landed value of these goods at US$ 27.97 per kg.

(ii) Several programmes and schemes to increase the quality, productivity and the competitiveness of the domestic silk industry have been instituted. The important ones are:—

- Research and Development efforts of Central Silk Board have been stepped up to improve quantity and productivity of sericulture, by evolution of more productive and stress tolerant breeds and hybrids of mulberry and non-mulberry food plants and silkworms; and development of low cost reeling and processing technologies in silk;
- Seed Support & Technical Assistance is being given by the Central Silk Board to State Governments, farmers & reelers by maintenance of parent races and basic seed, supply of commercial seed, and augmentation of grainage facilities for production of disease free high yielding and drought resistant seeds;
- Central assistance is being extended to States through Centrally Sponsored & Central sector schemes to strengthen farm infrastructure, increase area under sericulture, upgrade reeling facilities, improve finishing processes, strengthen seed supply, cocoon & Silk testing systems;
- Low cost and productivity enhancing technologies developed by the Central Silk Board are being popularized through Central assistance to beneficiaries, training to the States' extension machinery and beneficiaries, organizing of various awareness programmes, etc;
- For technology upgradation of the indigenous silk industry loan at 5% point less than applicable bank rate, under the Technological Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for the textiles sector is available *inter alia* to silk sector.

- Supply chain issues between the farmers, raw silk producers and the weavers are being addressed by advocating contract farming models, price linked grading, etc.
- Establishing quality certification systems for silkworm seeds, cocoons, yarn and fabric.
- An amount of Rs. 450 crores has been provided in the X Plan for the Sericulture sector to support the above strategy & programmes;
- Export of value added silk items is being encouraged through assistance to exporters for participation in fairs and exhibitions abroad, market research & surveys, etc.

"Ever Greening" Provision in patent act, 1970

2325. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ordinance amending the Patent Act, 1970 allows "every greening", i.e. filing patent applications for new forms of older patented drugs and of new uses of older drugs.

(b) if so, the details thereof including the patent applications filed and granted to the above category for the last one decade, year-wise and category-wise;

(c) whether "ever greening" may block the entry of generic drugs into the market;

(d) if so, the details thereof including action taken to overcome the above;

(e) if not, the reasons therefore; and

(f) the total number and details of life saving drugs as on today?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (e) The Patents Act, 1970 as amended by the Patents (Amendment) Ordinance, 2004 does not provide for evergreening of patents *vide* Section 3(d) and 3(e) which provide that the following are not inventions within the meaning of the Patents Act.

Section 3(b) "the mere discovery of any new property or mere new use for a known substance or of the mere use of a known process, machine or